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HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON AND NEW YORK

THE HOME BUILDER

THE
HOME BUILDER

BY

LYMAN ABBOTT

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
1910

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2794

A virtuous woman who can find?
For her price is far above rubies.
The heart of her husband trusteth in her,
And he shall have no lack of gain.
She doeth him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
She seeketh wool and flax,
And worketh willingly with her hands.
She is like the merchant-ships;
She bringeth her food from afar.
She riseth also while it is yet night,
And giveth meat to her household,
And their task to her maidens.
She considereth a field; and buyeth it
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
She girdeth her loins with strength,
And maketh strong her arms.
She perceiveth that her merchandise is profitable:
Her lamp goeth not out by night.
She layeth her hands to the distaff,
And her hands hold the spindle.
She stretcheth out her hand to the poor;
Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
She is not afraid of the snow for her household:
For all her household are clothed with scarlet.
She maketh for herself carpets of tapestry;
Her clothing is fine linen and purple.

Her husband is known in the gates,
When he sitteth among the elders of the land.
She maketh linen garments and selleth them;
And delivereth girdles unto the merchant.
Strength and dignity are her clothing;
And she laugheth at the time to come.
She openeth her mouth with wisdom;
And the law of kindness is on her tongue.
She looketh well to the ways of her household,
And eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children rise up and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praiseth her, saying:
Many daughters have done virtuously,
But thou excellest them all.
Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain:
But a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands;
And let her works praise her in the gates.

The Proverbs of Solomon.

I

HER MONUMENT

THE HOME BUILDER

I

HER MONUMENT

She built it herself; and yet she did not know that she had a monument. She lived in it; but she did not know that it existed.

She never dreamed that she was great; or that she was specially useful; or that she had achieved anything worth living for. Sometimes, when she read the stories of historic heroines, she, too, had her "dream of fair women," and looked with a sigh upon her life made up of little deeds, so little that even she who did them was not conscious of the doing, she whose loom moved so noiselessly

that she neither thought how long she was at it nor what a beautiful pattern she was weaving. Indeed, it would have seemed to her, if she had ever thought about herself or her work, to weave itself. But she did not think about herself. Self-consciousness would have destroyed her monument.

Her monument was her home. It grew up quietly, as quietly as a flower grows; and no one knew, she did not know herself, how much she had done to tend and water and train it. Her husband had absolute trust in her. He earned the money, she expended it. And as she put as much thought into her expenditure as he put into his earning, each dollar was doubled in the expending. She had inherited that mysterious faculty which

we call taste; and she cultivated it with fidelity. Every home she visited she studied, though always unconsciously, as though it were a museum or an art gallery; and from every visit she brought away some thought which came out of the alembic of her loving imagination, fitted to its appropriate place in her own home. She was too genuine to be an imitator; for imitation is always of kin to falsehood, and she abhorred falsehood. She was patient with everything but a lie. So she never copied in her own home or on her own person what she had seen elsewhere; yet everything she saw elsewhere entered into and helped complete the perfect picture of life which she was always painting with deft fingers in everything, from the honeysuckle

which she trained over the door to the bureau in the guest's room, which her designing made a new work of art for every new friend, if it were only by a new nosegay and a change of vases. Putting her own personality into her home, thus making every room and almost every article of furniture speak of her, she had the gift to draw out from every guest his personality and make him at home and so make him his truest and best self.

Neither man nor woman of the world could long resist the subtle influence of that home; the warmth of its truth and love thawed out the frozen proprieties from impersonated etiquette; and whatever circle of friends sat on the broad piazza in summer, or gathered around the

open fire in winter, knew for a time the rare joy of liberty — the liberty of perfect truth and perfect love. Her home was hospitable because her heart was large; and any one was her friend to whom she could minister. But her heart was like the old Jewish Temple — strangers only came into the court of the Gentiles, friends into an inner court; her husband and her children found a court still nearer her heart of hearts; yet even they knew that there was a Holy of Holies which she kept for her God, and they loved and revered her the more for it. So strangely were commingled in her the inclusiveness and the exclusiveness of love, its hospitality and its reserve.

She began to build the monument in her teens. She did not finish it

until she lay down to her last rest. What this monument was and how she built it, this little book tries to tell.

II

THE DAUGHTER

II

THE DAUGHTER

She does not believe in the saying, "Every one must live his own life." She believes in the saying, "We are members one of another." Rather, she does believe that every one must live his own life, but she also believes that her life is but one of several strands braided together. So each wire in the rope that holds the suspension bridge must bear its own share of the common burden; but it can do so only as it shares that burden with the other strands. She lives her own life, but that is the life of a sister to her brothers and a daughter to her parents.

She is comrade to her brothers. She is fellow with them in their studies, and when she can she joins with them in their sports. Their favorite encomium is, "She is bully, you know"; or "She is a lady, but she is no coward; she can do things." She appreciates their chivalry and so inspires it. There are, to her thinking, no boys quite like her brothers, and so, to their thinking, there are no girls quite like their sister. She accepts their protection and they accept her services. She never attempts to hold them back from adventurous undertakings merely because they are too adventurous for her; and if she is sometimes more carefully conscientious than they are, she never makes her conscience a law for their governance. If she does not think that

she must live her own life, she is quite sure that they must live theirs, and she never endeavors to make their conduct conform to her tastes or her conscience. She has nothing of the feminine Pharisee about her—of all feminine qualities the most irritating to the masculine temper.

Almost from her babyhood she is the companion of her mother; she early grows to be her mother's confidant. It is her childish pride to be her mother's helper, to do the things her mother does. She understands the Roman Catholic's veneration for the Virgin Mary; her mother is her Madonna. As she grows into early womanhood she grows into a clearer comprehension of what the home is: a rest and refuge from the strenuous and stormy life outside, and a tonic

to virtue and an inspiration to vigor in that life. To make home pure and wholesome, so to minister in it that it shall provide for her brothers as free an atmosphere as the club, and a better table and a jollier companionship — this is her growing ambition. She gradually assumes a share in her mother's responsibilities as well as in her mother's work, and becomes the counselor of her on whose counsels she once so implicitly depended. As she goes to school, and perhaps to college, their lives diverge but their affections are not weakened. New vistas open before her which her mother never saw, new impulses she experiences which her mother never experienced. She welcomes them. But they do not separate her from her mother. And because she still

respects convictions of her mother which she no longer possesses, her mother respects the convictions of her daughter which she never possessed.

The companion and confidant of her mother, she becomes comrade to her father. Neither is conscious of the process. She does not believe that business and politics are dull, nor does she think that nothing is worth listening to which she does not instantly understand. She listens, at first with an amused, later with an eager interest, to the table-talk of her father and his visitors. And from their conversation she learns in time more of banking or trade or politics or law or pedagogy or theology than some of her companions learn from the lecturers and text-books in their schools.

Some day she surprises her father with a question which shows how much unconscious training her womanly insight has had — and thereafter father and daughter are intellectual comrades. Thus, while from her school or college the daughter brings to the home the reflection and the impulses of a larger life than the home knows, she is getting from the home the influence of a more practical life than the school or college knows. She receives by contributing and contributes by receiving. Because of her companionship in the daily life of her mother and her father, they enter into companionship in the results of her academic training. The home shows gradually the influence of the more modern thought and the better taste, in art and litera-

ture, which she brings into it. The chromo on the wall is replaced by the photograph or the etching. The subscription-book pedler knocks at the door in vain, and some excellent classical series replaces the miscellaneous collection of the cheaper current literature. Father, mother, brother, sister has lived each his own life; but because they have been members one of another, the life of the home is larger and richer than any one alone could have made it. Yes! larger and richer than all combined could have made it, if each had not brought into it some experience which no other one had to bring.

III

THE BRIDE

III

THE BRIDE

She has not fallen in love. Love has been a flight, not a fall. She has risen into a new life; in her is born a new experience.

Perhaps it has come suddenly, with a rush which has overwhelmed her with its tumultuous surprise. Perhaps it has grown gradually, so gradually that she has been quite unconscious of its advent until it has taken complete possession of her. As the water lily bursts open the moment the sun strikes upon it, and the rose turns from bud to blossom so gradually that the closest observation discerns no movement in the petals,

so some souls bloom instantly when love touches them with its sunbeam, and others, unconscious and unobserved, pass from girlhood to womanhood. In either case it is love that works the miracle.

She has not known the secret of her own heart. Or if she has known it, she cannot tell it to any one else —no, not even to herself! She only knows that within her is a secret room, wherein is a sacred shrine. But she has not the key; and what is enshrined there she will not permit even herself to know. She is a strange contradiction to herself. She is restless away from him and strangely silent in his presence, or breaks the silence only to be still more strangely voluble. She chides herself for not being herself, and has in truth be-

come or is becoming another self. So one could imagine a green shoot beckoned imperiously by the sunlight, and neither daring to emerge from its familiar life beneath the ground nor able to resist the impulse; or a bird irresistibly called by life, and neither daring to break the egg nor able to remain longer in the prison-house of its infancy.

At last—how long the time seemed—he speaks. And then she knows. He has the key to the secret room in which all unknown to her his image is enshrined. He has proved his right to enter this room because he has its key. If she hesitates, it is not, as he fancies, because she doubts him; it is herself she doubts. She needs his confidence to overcome her self-distrust. But when it is overcome, she

gives herself to him without reserve. All day long she sings softly to herself the song, which she has altered to suit her own heart's gladness: —

"He is mine; he is mine; he has told me he is mine,
Yes, only mine."

And when she sings to him in the evenings this his favorite song, as the poet wrote it: "She is mine," she is singing it to herself as she has revised it.

The girlish talk of love and lovers is henceforth stale and commonplace. The cheap jokes of the comic papers on love and its poor counterfeit, flirtation, are a blasphemy. Love-romances and love-poems have lost their charm, so inadequate are they to tell love's true story. She is herself the romance; she is herself the poem.

When the wedding-day comes she has no desire to omit from the service the promise to obey. He does not care for it, but she does. She wishes, not to submit a reluctant will to his, but to make his will her own. She wishes a sovereign and is glad to have found him — no! to have been found by him. She laughs at the virgin reformers who have never known the mystery of love and are protesting against the subjection of woman. This is what she desires, and she looks now with amusement, now with pity, on those who do not know how blessed it is to be love's subject. To give up her home, abandon her name, merge her personality in his keeping — this is her glad ambition, and it swallows up all other ambitions. She believes in Paul's saying, which she never

understood before: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church." This loyalty, this self-devotion gives her a great delight. She knows as she has never known before the meaning of the words consecration, devotion, sacrifice. She believes, too, in that other word of Paul: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." She believes her bridegroom does so love, and to his love she surrenders herself with a great gladness.

Has she no doubts, no fears? Yes, sometimes. Doubts that shake her faith only to strengthen it, fears that haunt her joy only to enhance it. Hers is the exhilaration of one who

has found a treasure so great that she cannot believe it is hers; but her wonder whether she is not in a dream from which by and by will come a rude awakening does but increase her tumultuous gladness. The sweet content of assured possession only the experience of a happy married life can give to her. But her doubts are not forebodings, and her questionings never make her for a moment hesitate. And all through the marriage service her heart is softly saying to itself: "Whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

IV

THE WIFE

IV

THE WIFE

In true marriage lies

"Nor equal, nor unequal: each fulfills
Defect in each, and always thought in thought,
Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,
The single pure and perfect animal,
The two-celled heart beating with one full stroke,
Life."

She laughs at the cynical reformer who tells her that she has bartered away her independence for her board and clothes. Economic independence has no charms for her; she has no interest in the problem how the married woman is to maintain it. The assertion that she has no will of her own and no judgment of her own would roil her were it not for her

happy sense of humor. Thanks to that, it amuses her.

Her will was never so strong as it is now, and every day of her happy married life strengthens it. But her one dominating desire is, not to be independent, but to be dependent on the man she loves. Her one will is to help him fulfill the purpose of his life, and, fulfilling, to make it ever a nobler and yet nobler purpose. The mystery of the Trinity is no longer the mystery it was. She can realize that there may be three Persons in One God, since in her own experience there are two persons in one life:—

"A two-celled heart beating with one full stroke."

Her supreme desire is to make his life noble—nobler than he ever dreamed

of making it. His life? No! Their life. For their life is one and she has

> "Set herself to man
> Like perfect music unto noble words."

Which is worthier, the music or the libretto? It is hard to say. But this is certain, that perfect music often redeems a prosaic libretto.

For this very reason she preserves her independence of thought the more jealously, that she may be his wise counselor. She looks at life through a different window. In the pure light of the home the problems seem other than they seem in the murky light of the street. She is no echo of his mind, no soft amen to his oracular opinions. Her personal desires are subdued to the one desire to make their joint life a nobler one;

but because they are so subdued, her will is the more tenacious and her judgment the more clear and calm.

Their judgments do not always agree, but their wills never clash. For she is loyal to her husband, as a soldier is loyal to his superior officer. He may think the officer mistaken, but that affords no reason why every effort should not be put forth to make successful his superior's plan, however preordained to failure he regards it. She is ever cautious of tendering her advice lest it should be interpreted as her desire. For he, if he be a true husband, uses the responsibility which she gladly lays upon him to lighten her load, to lessen her cares, and to add to her enjoyments. When, like the blunderers most men are, he fails even in this,

and makes her task more difficult by his mistaken efforts to make it lighter, she still is glad; for she takes the will for the deed. If he deems it best for what he calls his work and what she calls theirs, to move from one locality to another, she leaves the home in which her life has been intertwined by a thousand associations of which he does not dream, not without a pang but with a smile. If he changes his vocation, she changes her thoughts to fit the new employment. If a foolish friend protests, she answers gayly, "I did not marry a lawyer, a doctor, or a mechanic,—I married a man."

How does she help him? This depends partly on her temperament, still more on his. Perhaps she enters into his life and shares it with him.

If he is a mechanic, she becomes an unofficial member of his labor union, —now indignant at his wrongs and helping him bravely to correct them, now pacifying the causeless anger which his fellows have stirred up over some fancied or insignificant insult or injury. If he is a doctor, she studies his cases and gives him the benefit of her quick intuition. If he is a minister, she becomes his confessor who is confessor to so many others. Perhaps, on the contrary, she as sedulously keeps out of his life, deliberately remains in ignorance of it, and studies only how she may make his home a harbor over whose breakwater no waves shall roll, whatever be the stress of weather outside. Perhaps she is both his wise counselor and his rest from perplexities, and

knows not only when to speak and when to be silent, but also when to know and when to be ignorant.

She is under no illusions respecting her husband. She does not think him faultless. She does not think him either the greatest or the best man that ever lived. Her love is not blind, but clear-eyed. No one sees his faults more clearly than does she. But she loves him—not despite his faults but because of them. His weaknesses are her opportunity, and they endear him to her. And yet—such is the illogicalness of love—she longs to see him conquer them and fulfill her own ideal and become what her invincible faith in him believes he can become. But she never tries to make him over. She did not marry him to reform him. Her tongue is no emery-

wheel with which she endeavors to polish him off and make him presentable to others. She took him not only "for richer, for poorer," but also "for better, for worse." If she finds him poorer or worse than she thought, it never occurs to her that this is a reason for leaving him or for lessened devotion.

And yet unconsciously she is making him over. She lures him from the evening paper, the feeble echo of voices that have been dinging in his ears all day, to an evening with her in romance or in poetry; or she wins from him an invitation to the concert, the theatre, or the art gallery; or she entices him to an excursion in the country and an acquaintance with the wild flowers. Thus, allured by her companionship, he finds him-

self becoming acquainted with worlds he never knew before. She is not a philosopher; she has no philosophy; but she acts quite unsconsciously on Paul's philosophy, "Overcome evil with good." She never criticises him to others, rarely to himself; and not often in the court of her own conscience. But she sees the better behind the worser self, and in the sunshine of her appreciation all his hidden virtues begin to grow and all the budding faculties to blossom. Her faith in him cures him of self-distrust and inspires him with self-confidence. In time of disaster her courage shames his fears, and her buoyant spirits hearten him. In time of temptation her clear vision of righteousness clarifies his vision, and her strong faith in the triumph of

righteousness arms him for battle and takes the sting from apparent defeat. If he is sometimes infected by the motto of the street, "Nothing succeeds like success," her spirit responds, "Failure in a noble endeavor is better than ignoble success." And he feels the truth of the words which she is careful not to utter.

So these two, united by one purpose, animated by one spirit, grow ever into a closer unity, — preserving ever their separate personalities, yet ever becoming more and more one person. To serve him and deserve his reverencing love is her supreme desire: this is to her what applause is to the actor, wealth to the merchant, office to the politician. Love is her success. Only her husband can crown her — and he does.

For she has made herself his wisest counselor, his supreme inspiration, the ideal of his imagination, and the idol of his affections; and as he looks back along the life which they have lived together, he says, with no thought of irreverence, "By the grace of my wife, I am what I am."

V

THE MOTHER

V

THE MOTHER

She cannot understand how any woman should not want children, to be her companions and to trust in her, love her, reverence her; children whom she may nurse, protect, teach, guide, govern, mold into manhood and womanhood. To have this possession has been her dream ever since with alternate tenderness and severity she ruled her dolls. The hoped-for hour has come. She welcomes it with a gladsome awe. As she prepares to enter the unknown experience of motherhood, her heart is stirred, but more deeply, with all the glad apprehension with which

she entered married life as bride. She goes to that mystic gateway which opens into the infinite beyond, and receives into her keeping God's gift of a little child. She wonders at the Father's confidence in her, wonders that He dares to trust so sacred a task to her care. But one child is not enough. She wishes a brood. The Oriental passion of motherhood possesses her. Another child is given to her, a third, a fourth. They cluster about her, sharing with each other and with her their songs and their sorrows, their toils and their sports. The Holy Family has reappeared again. No old master ever painted such a group; no Raphael ever interpreted, no painter could interpret, her holy gladness.

New joys usurp the old ones in her

life. She did enjoy music; now to her the sweetest songs are the lullabys she sings to her own babe. She did enjoy literature; now the best literature is the stories she reads to her children. No society is to her so delightful as the society which they afford her. Better than any dance she ever shared is it to watch their frolic; the ball-room has no charms that can compete with the nursery. No eloquence thrills her heart as does the language of her children, who speak what is even to their father an unknown tongue. Never did tulip-fancier in the days of the tulip mania in Holland watch the blossoming of his cherished flower so sedulously, so jealously, with such anxious gladness, as she watches the gradual development of this child. She detects

her own faults reappearing in her children, and sets herself to change the pattern which they are unconsciously following. She quickly learns to distinguish between the faults of immaturity, which time and growth will cure, and the vices which if uncorrected will grow with her children's growth and strengthen with their strength. The little vanities and little tyrannies which amuse the careless visitor cause her no amusement. They cause her much meditation. So to guide, so to govern, that all her guiding, all her governing shall be training, is her problem. For she sees that she must form habits of life; she knows that action oft repeated becomes a habit, and habit long continued becomes a second nature. How to make that second

nature what she will wish it to be when her boys go out from her tuition to live their own self-governed lives, when her girls go out from their home to make homes for other husbands and other children, is her problem, never solved but always in process of solution. Her wish is, not that they shall have no burdens, but that they shall be strong to bear them; not that they shall have no tasks, but that they shall be patient to fulfill them. She wishes for them, not the pleasures of an easy life, but the joys of a useful one. She knows that they are born into a world of law, and that the first lesson they must learn is obedience. Obedience therefore she requires with a steadiness of unrelenting purpose which quickly secures their respecting loyalty and

wins for her a love that is also reverence.

She governs with absolute justice. It cannot be said that she has no favorite; the youngest is always her favorite because he most needs her care. But this favoritism does no harm, since all the family share it with her. And there is no favoritism in her law enforcement. It is true that penalties are fitted to the child, not to the crime; but it is also true that they are fitted with impartiality. She never condones in one a spirit which she condemns in another. She distinguishes between virtues to be cultivated and duties to be imposed. If the baby seizes the toy of his older brother, she interferes only to compel the infant thief to restore the stolen property. If she wishes to

counsel generosity in the plundered brother, she takes a different occasion to give the counsel. She realizes that the seeds of lawlessness and anarchy are sown in many a nursery, and she will sow no such dragon teeth in hers. All punishment in her monarchy is reformatory; and crimes are punished, not according to the inconvenience which they have produced, but according to the evil spirit which inspired them. She respects her children's rights, and chief of these is the right to have no lie told to them and no promise broken. They learn that their mother's word is as good as her bond. And she teaches them always to deserve her confidence by deserving theirs.

The one hard experience of her life comes when she and her husband

disagree respecting the administration of justice in the community under their joint government. Perhaps her husband is erratic or impulsive and his government fitful; perhaps it is too stern and she wishes it tempered with mercy; perhaps, absent from home and absorbed in affairs without, he does not see as she does the faults to be eradicated, or realize the necessity of discipline. But whatever their disagreement, she is sure that no wrong so great can be inflicted on her children as that inflicted by a divided authority; that whatever errors she may discern in her husband's rule, interference by her is no remedy for the errors. Whatever she may do to persuade her husband to her way of thinking when the court is in secret session,

she never files a dissenting opinion before the children. Since she always sustains his authority he learns in time to sustain hers. The worst of all government is no government; and from that irreparable wrong her subjects never suffer.

She not only loves her children, she respects them. They have wills, tastes, thoughts, judgments of their own, and this is as she wishes it to be. She distinguishes clearly between counsel and command: command must be obeyed; counsel may be disregarded without rebuke and without loss of favor. She wishes her boys to be manly boys, and she knows that they cannot be manly boys if they are guarded from all peril. She welcomes for them opportunities for adventure foreign to her

own tastes — athletic sports, swimming, boating, fishing, hunting. If she is anxious for their safety, if she sees them depart on each new adventurous errand with foreboding and welcomes them home from each expedition with a new sense of danger passed, she successfully hides her anxieties from them. Her own courage inspires them to do and to dare. When they are yet in the nursery she enters into their life, making it her own. She is architect with the block-builder, artist with the water-color painter; she rides in the coach drawn by four spirited chairs which Tommy drives, and attends with her gayest social spirit the afternoon tea to which Jennie invites her. And as the life of her children grows and widens, her life grows and widens

also. In the country she rides on the sled down the long hill, steers the boat which the children row, sits by, knitting with nimble fingers, while they fish, joins on equal terms in their picnic or their camp. And when the excursions take a wider range, while she cannot accompany them, no one is more eager to provide their camp equipment and no one more interested to hear the tale of each adventure when they return. When college days come, she helps to furnish the young collegian's room according to the young collegian's taste. A weekly interchange of letters, which he sometimes thinks himself too busy to write, but which no preoccupation can prevent her from writing, keeps him linked to his home. When he returns he brings a

college mate home with him, quite sure that his mother will have some attractive girls to meet them; and the thought that his companions are to be his mother's companions also is never quite absent from his consciousness as he forms his friendships. So, by entering into her children's life with seeming abandon, she has, undeliberately and all the more effectively, lifted them up to share in hers.

And yet they grow away from her. They find companionships that are not congenial to her taste; read books which to her are deadly dull or more deadly distasteful; take recreations which in her early training were prohibited; break away from social traditions which are dear to her and from religious traditions which

are sacred to her. Despite some hours of spiritual loneliness and some not easily suppressed tears, she would not have it otherwise. She wishes her children to be men and women —to live their own lives, make their own place, be their own selves. And she is not the less proud of them and happy in them that she cannot always understand them. When at last the time comes for them to marry and make their own homes, she is glad with their gladness. She asks no recognition for herself, asks only leave to do what they will permit to make the wedding-day for them as joyous as was her wedding-day a quarter of a century ago. When her neighbors condole with her because her children are departing, she replies, "I have not lost a son, I have

gained a daughter." She counts not the absentees but the additions to her home circle. Of sons-in-law and daughters-in-law she will not hear. They are sons-in-love and daughters-in-love, she says; and they find room in her heart by the side of her own children. For her the vision of motherhood is completed, but not its joys. "Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her."

VI

THE HOUSEKEEPER

VI

THE HOUSEKEEPER

She has a passion for cleanliness. She abhors dirt and justifies her abhorrence by the Scriptural command, "Abhor that which is evil." If dirt be not evil, she knows not what is. She is contributor to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; but she hates vermin as David hated the enemies of Jehovah, with a perfect hatred, and she pursues them with a persecution as conscientious and as relentless as those that were waged by the mediæval inquisitor against the heretics. She is not a scientist; but she needs no scientist to tell her that the germs of insidious

disease lurk in dirt and are carried by vermin, and the definition of dirt as "matter misplaced" does nothing to cool her vehement ardor.

But no such passion for order possesses her. Cleanliness is itself a virtue. Next to godliness? If she were quite frank with herself, she would probably change the order and say godliness is next to cleanliness. Certainly she would prefer as a visitor a clean sinner to a dirty saint, and she can find no severer condemnation for coarse language which the boys sometimes pick up in the streets than to tell them with a frown that it is dirty, no severer rebuke for their occasional petty meannesses to each other than to say that they are acting in a nasty manner. But order is not itself a virtue: it is only a means to

an end. The end is general comfort and general convenience, and she never sacrifices the end to the means. She endeavors to have a place for everything; she endeavors to train the children — but not her husband — to put each thing in its appointed place. But she does not nag. If she sometimes follows a careless husband or son, picking up after him, she never does it with an ostentatious patience, or with a sigh which says, "See how much trouble your carelessness is making me." Her rooms do not look as spick and span as her neighbors', and she sometimes chides herself for not being as good a housekeeper. But she is a better *homekeeper*, which is far more important. For neither her husband nor her boys go to clubs or to other homes for lib-

erty; her home is as free as the club. If order is heaven's first law, liberty is its atmosphere; and if she finds it difficult, as she sometimes does, to preserve both the law and the liberty, she prefers the liberty.

So there are in her household hours for meals and meal hours and the two do not always coincide. The hour for breakfast is half-past seven; but if some morning the boys would make an early start for a fishing expedition, the breakfast hour is six; if another morning they can, without neglect of duty, sleep late and wish to do so, it changes to half-past eight or nine. This requires both tact and efficiency in dealing with the kitchen; but when a neighbor asks her if this is not very difficult to manage, she replies cheerfully, "This is what I am for." Neither

husband nor children ever know and rarely guess what tact and toil are required. For she surmounts her obstacles without talking about them, except occasionally in a burst of confidence to her husband or her daughter, and then as a narrative of her triumphs, not as a history of her trials.

This subordination of time and place to comfort and convenience is a part of her quite unconscious and therefore unformulated theory that life is the end and that all household arrangements are means to that end. She therefore believes that things are for folks, not folks for things, and always and instinctively acts on that belief. When children from the city make a visit to her country home and ask whether they may run on

the grass, she says, "Of course"; and when an older visitor, fearing the effect on the young spring-shoots, asks if that is good for the lawn, she replies smilingly, "No! but it is good for the children." She has no use for books that cannot be read, chairs that cannot be sat in, a piano that cannot be played, a room that cannot be used. She has some fine editions, for she is fond of books, but she does not keep them under lock and key. She would rather injure the book in teaching the child how to use it than injure the child by refusing him the book. If a careless boy or a still more careless visitor demolishes a parlor chair by trying to balance himself in it upon the two hind-legs, she blames the chair, not the sitter, and does not get another of so delicate a construc-

tion. The piano-tuner has to come to her house twice as often as to the house of her neighbor; but her children learn to play by playing. And though they may never become musicians, they learn to love music, and in after life a piano always brings to them thoughts of their home and their mother. She has no parlor with closed blinds and drawn curtains, from which the sun is carefully excluded lest it fade the precious carpet, and into which visitors are received in state with a sunless and frigid hospitality. Sometimes a critical visitor surprises an unusual disorder due to a misused liberty in the parlor, which Harry has for the nonce converted into a nursery, and the mother expresses the wish gently to herself that Harry were not so heedless. But

to shut Harry out of the parlor she is quite certain would be no cure for his heedlessness, and that, not the disordered parlor, is what she wishes to cure.

Her servants gradually, very gradually, imbibe the spirit of their mistress. For she is more than mistress to her servants. She believes with Queen Victoria that a good servant is a good friend. If a servant refuses to become a friend and insists on remaining a bit of animated machinery, they part as soon as the housekeeper has become convinced that no friendly bond is possible between them. On the other hand, if the servant be loyal to the home, interested in her work, friend to her mistress and to the household, and willing to learn, the mistress has unfailing pa-

tience in teaching. She will endure neither disloyalty nor indifference, but she will endure everything else, even much unintentional impertinence to herself. She is not dependent upon her servants; she can keep house without them, and they are quite conscious of that fact. And because she will readily put herself out to accommodate them, they are ready to put themselves out to accommodate her. She keeps house, however, for her husband and her children, not for the servants, and she adjusts the affairs of her kingdom to meet the needs of her family, not of those who are employed to minister to it. To this rule there is one exception: the Sunday meals are so adjusted as to give her servants an opportunity for church, and they are encouraged

to fulfill with fidelity all that their consciences, not hers, call on them to fulfill church-wise.

The doors of her home are always open to the friends of her husband and of her children. She is glad to see them and welcomes them right cordially to what she has to give. But she never strains endeavor to give them something better than she gives her own. She has not two standards, one for her family, another for the stranger. She makes no effort to conform her living to the accustomed standard of her visitors; she is glad to see them if they will adapt their life for a few days to her standards. It is perhaps for this reason that she is always more ready to welcome men than their wives. Critical herself, and sensitively conscious of

what she calls the defects of her housekeeping, she dreads to exhibit them to the critical eyes of other housekeepers. Yet her guests feel a charm in the free air of her home, which they do not feel in that of homes that are kept with more military precision. If she has not a reputation among women of being a model housekeeper, she has the reputation among men of having a model home. She knows what the women think and laments her deficiencies; she does not know what the men think, and would not much care if she did know. She knows that her husband and her children are home-lovers and she is content. For love, not ambition, is the inspiration of her life and the reward of her endeavors.

VII

THE PHILANTHROPIST

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THE PHILANTHROPIST

She believes that charity begins at home, but she does not believe that it ends there. Her first, her chief interests are in the home; but they are not her sole interests. Whatever concerns humanity concerns her. Her children are presently going to take part in the world's affairs, and if they are not to grow away from her she must now have an intelligent interest in what will presently interest them. If they are to be trained to be intelligent in their interest, and high-minded in their purpose, it is in their home that they must receive the training. So she conscientiously

goes out from her home, to mix in the life of her village, or her city, and to bring back from these excursions the broader outlook and the larger enthusiasms which they give to her. Her husband and her children are better served because she is not merely their upper servant; because she has a life of her own, separate yet not dissociated from theirs. Her husband comes in from his contact with other men to find his wife a better companion because of her contact with other women; and her children come in from their school to find a mother who can give interest to their studies by making them useful in interpreting current events. Pekin becomes not merely the capital of China, but the city where the American missionaries were cooped

up during that dreadful siege; and the story of ancient Rome under the Cæsars is vitalized when it is interpreted by modern Russia under the Czars.

But though she is interested in public affairs, she has no ambition to become a public woman. She believes in woman's rights, and she thinks that among them is the right to be exempt from militia duty, police duty, jury duty — and suffrage duty. She has too much pride in her father, her brothers, her husband, and her sons, to accept the Pharisaic boast that women are so superior to men that their votes would purify all public life of its pollution. The public platform has no attractions for her; and while she has no desire to deny the more venturesome women

the right to be public orators, or audiences the right to listen to their orations, she has no desire to be either speaker or auditor in such assemblies. She listens with scant respect to the claim that women can do anything that men can do. She has as little use for masculine women as for feminine men. She protests that man is not the standard by which woman is to measure herself; woman, she believes, must set her own standard. She is not ambitious for power, but cares much for influence. She tells her daughter that power is combative, influence persuasive; power displays itself, influence hides itself; power acts from without, influence acts from within; power controls, influence creates; power dies with the death of the

king who possessed it, influence lives on in ever-widening circles after the death of the mother who exercised it. And she incites them to be ambitious for influence, not for power. Her political sympathies are mildly with her husband and her sons. If they belong to different parties, her sympathies are either divided or perplexed. But she is far more interested in promoting, by her influence, the victory of honesty and purity in all parties, than the victory of one party over another party.

For this reason her interests are greater in social service than in politics. She is interested in schools, hospitals, missions, social settlements, public libraries, and in various charities — for the blind, the deaf and dumb, the crippled, the insane, the

variously handicapped. For these charities make men and women, or make them over, and she is more interested in making men and women than in governing them after they are made. She is interested in every good work, but she does not take part in every good work. She elects one, or two, or three forms of public service. With these she acquaints herself; the rest she passes by; not because she does not care, but because she rightly judges that it is better to do a few things thoroughly than many things superficially.

To these forms of social service she gives not merely her money — or her husband's money; she gives herself,—her time, her thought, her wisdom in counsel and her enthusiasm for humanity. She finds in them

an interest which some of her sisters find or think they find in calls, receptions, and bridge whist. It never occurs to her to claim superiority to them on that account. She would as soon think of claiming superiority because she finds in music the interest which her sister finds in art. But, in fact, calls, receptions, and bridge whist do not interest her; and social settlements, working-girls' clubs, Young Women's Christian Associations, homes for the blind and the crippled, do interest her. She sometimes grows wearied with what seems to her a maximum of talk with a minimum of action, with motions and cross-motions, amendments and counter-amendments, upon questions of mere phraseology or still pettier questions of personal precedence.

But her sense of humor saves her from excessive irritation and enables her to play the part of a peacemaker. Resolute as to the end to be accomplished, she is comparatively indifferent as to the means to be employed to accomplish the end. She has learned a lesson from engineering science, and when she cannot force her way through an obstacle, she diplomatically goes around it. Always persistent as to ultimate purpose, always ready to compromise as to methods of achieving that purpose, she is honored by all parties as a woman of wise counsels, and because she aspires to leadership over none comes to be accepted as a leader by all. This is also due to her faith that influence is more valuable than power. Catholic in spirit as well as

conciliatory in method, she is ready to work with any one who will work with her for the betterment of the ignorant or the succor of the suffering. She never asks whether her allies are Jews or Christians, Roman Catholics or Protestants, Orthodox or Agnostic; she only asks if they are willing to coöperate with her for a common end. When her less catholic neighbor asks her, "Can two walk together unless they be agreed?" she replies, "No! But they must be agreed on the objects to be accomplished, not on the opinions which they entertain." The impracticable reformer sometimes tries her patience sorely, but even the impracticable reformer does not exhaust it. The only persons she cannot work with are the self-seeking, who make

philanthropy a cover for their vanity or their ambition. She is keen to see through all false pretense and quick to hate it. Neither with deception nor with self-deception is she conciliatory. Her catholic spirit makes her equally interested in home missions and foreign missions, in social settlements and church work. The limit to her activities is set, not by any narrowness of her sympathies, but by the hours and the strength at her disposal. So far as hours and strength allow, she is equally at the service of Jew and Gentile, of distant foreigner and nearest neighbor, of hardened sinner and exasperating saint. And all unite to call her blessed.

VIII

THE SAINT

VIII

THE SAINT

She is neither a theologian, a mystic, nor a recluse. The sixteenth century would have neither burned nor canonized her. The twentieth century is perplexed by her. Her coworkers love and trust her; but the orthodox think she is not quite sound and the unorthodox that she is still unemancipated.

She was brought up in a home where piety and orthodoxy were regarded as inseparable companions. She accepted the theology of her church with unquestioning credence as the full and final word of divine revelation. Not without regret has

she seen the creed of her father shattered by the fermenting wine of the nineteenth century. But love is stronger than logic. She has found intimate friends outside the circle of her denomination—a Roman Catholic, a Unitarian, a Jew—and has worked with them in faith and hope and love for the Kingdom which is peace on earth and good-will among men. Thus she has learned that piety is the inseparable companion of other than orthodox creeds. Before she ever heard of the Higher Criticism, she had, with a woman's spiritual intuition, anticipated its teachings. She has long ceased to read the Levitical Code and the Imprecatory Psalms; and she read the Samson and Elisha stories as legends, the books of Ruth and Esther as ro-

mances, the book of Job as an epic, and the Song of Songs as a love-poem, before the Higher Critics had given her leave to do so. So the theological and critical changes when they came did not distress her. She never cared for metaphysics, whether secular or religious. She never thought much about the metaphysical relations of Jesus of Nazareth to the Father, and never cared much about what others thought. But life has only deepened her faith in the Christ as the Great Teacher from whom she wishes to learn the laws of life, the Great Leader whose ministry she wishes to join, and the great Life-giver in whose companionship she finds solace and strength. She has no theory of the atonement, does not know what the various theo-

ries are, and could not tell what effect the death of Christ is supposed by orthodox theologians to have had on the universe. But she knows that she never liked Cowper's hymn, —

"There is a fountain filled with blood,"

and she never wearies of Watts's hymn, —

"When I survey the wondrous cross."

But her faith in the sacrifice of Christ finds its deepest expression in her own spirit of continuous and joyful self-sacrifice. She does not know how Christ's sacrifice saves the world, but she has a very keen desire to do what she can to save her world from sin and shame and suffering, whatever self-sacrifice it may cost her.

She is as little a mystic as a theologian. Christian Science has no at-

tractions for her. She has found evil too real in herself, in her children, and in the great world, and she has suffered too acutely from pain herself and in the pain of others, to be soothed by the philosophy that there is no evil and no pain, and that the world is what we make it by our imaginings. When her Christian Science friend says to her, "You know that we believe that God is love," she answers cheerfully, "Yes, that is what I have always believed." She does not add, though she might, "Inspired by that love, I am devoting myself to diffusing it in all around me." Her faith is more than belief in a Book, a Church, or a Creed. It is an experience. But that experience does not rest upon itself. It is not an air-plant. It is rooted in

the past—in her belief in the unique personality of the Man whose life makes glorious the Book, has inspired and is still inspiring the Church, and is sometimes revealed, sometimes concealed, by the Creed.

She is no recluse. True! to follow Christ is sometimes to go away and be alone. These secret hours she has, and their meaning no one knows but herself. Into this Holy of Holies of her life not even her husband or her children can enter; and they reverence and love her the more for this her one experience of exclusiveness. But these hours of separation are hours of preparation. She has no desire to stay on the Mount of Transfiguration, while need waits for help in the valley below;

no desire to remain adoring the vision in the cell, while hunger cries for bread at the convent gates. She no longer thinks that piety and orthodoxy are inseparable companions, but piety and philanthropy are, and she has no use for the piety which does not send the praying soul forth to give succor to those that are without. She reads in her New Testament of a Christ that came eating and drinking and was a friend of publicans and sinners, and she looks for him among men where he was found in the first century. She is not a Browning student; she likes best the simple in art, music, and literature. But Browning has expressed her faith that the place to look for God is among his children: —

"Welcome squalid vesture, harsh voice, fateful face!
God is soul, souls I and thou: with souls should souls have place."

She is not a great churchwoman. She goes to church rather because custom and duty call her than because inclination prompts. She listens respectfully to the sermon, but it is an even chance if she has not finished it before the preacher has come to his conclusion; if so, she spends the remaining time, not in irritable criticism, but in her own profitable meditations. When the preacher is a prophet with spiritual intuitions, and her spirit responds to his, her first thought is to borrow the sermon in the hope that it may have a message for some absent friend. The luxury of listening for herself alone she knows not. Public

worship appeals to her through her sympathies which are broad, rather than through her tastes which are individual. She can worship with any congregation if the congregation is genuine, and with no congregation that is not. She is equally ready to share in the devotions of the pious pilgrim kneeling before the crucifix, the responding congregation in the great Protestant cathedral, and the silent worshiper in the Friends' meeting house. But perfunctory prayer and praises, however æsthetically rendered, are hateful to her. What attracts her to church is not the intellectual ability of the preacher or the æsthetic quality of the worship, but the opportunity for service. She often quotes the saying, "The church is the preacher's force, not his field."

She believes that it is a working organization, and that is to her the best church which does the best work.

Her religion is all summed up in three words: Love, Service, Sacrifice. She is a saint, not because she is a scholar in theology, a mystic in feeling, or a recluse in society, but because in fellowship with God and in faith in Jesus Christ his Son, she devotes herself with singleness of purpose, in the home and in the church, in her domestic activities and her social philanthropies, to the service of her husband, her children, and her neighbors. Whomsoever she can help by word or deed she counts her neighbor.

IX

THE GRANDMOTHER

IX

THE GRANDMOTHER

She does not fall into the sere and yellow leaf. No faded glory hers; no dismantling of the home as the time draws near when the tenant will leave it. Not in her girlhood, not in her bridehood, was she more delicate and dainty. She never comes to breakfast in disarray. In summer her white dressing-sack is scrupulously white; in winter her breakfast-gown may be faded but never ragged. In her bedroom her wrapper is as fit for the chamber as the dress which she puts on for dinner is for the more formal hours. She desires that her husband and her children shall see

her at her best. She cares more for their appreciation than for the admiration of her guests. In sooth she cares more for the fitness of things than for either appreciation or admiration. She is not indifferent to either, but her dress is the expression of her own nature. She loves beauty in all its forms: flowers, fabrics, precious stones; but she does not measure the value of flowers by the bigness of the bouquet, nor fabrics by their costliness, nor jewels by their number. In the season there are always flowers on her dressing-table, her library-table, and her dining-table, but her house is never turned into a florist's display. So her fabrics are carefully chosen, but her dress expresses her own taste, not the taste of her dressmaker; and one

ring as a companion of her wedding-ring, and one pin at the throat, constitute her usual jeweled ornaments.

She has but one anxiety about her dress — to avoid the false pretense of youth. When her husband, who knows how young she is, wishes to clothe her in the radiant garments of her earlier life, she gently but effectively resists. There can be no beauty without fitness, she thinks, and she converts her husband to her thinking by a fitness which is beauty. She believes that the beauty of old women no less than that of old men is the gray hair, and her hoary head she makes a crown of glory. To its care she pays as much attention as she ever did to the brown hair of her youth, and her husband notices that she takes rather more time than she

did thirty years before in "putting her hair to bed" at night. She delights in the portraits of old women by Rembrandt and by Frans Hals, and she believes that it is as admirable for the woman to make of herself an artistic portrait as it is for the painter to reproduce the portrait which the woman has made. She counts it no waste of time to add the charm of a beautiful old age to her home. But she counts truth as the soul of beauty and all lies as ugly, however they are dressed. Only if it be found in the way of righteousness is the hoary head a crown of glory. Since not too often does old age cultivate its own form of beauty, she finds herself unconsciously singular, and more men admire her at seventy than admired her at seventeen. She

is woman enough to be naïvely gratified by the admiration.

She does not simulate youth, and yet she is young. Her smile is as captivating as ever, her laugh as merry and as contagious; and though she can no longer romp with her juniors, she enjoys a vivacious game by proxy as much as she ever did in person, and teases with the same innocent and admirable coquetry. Age has quieted her body but not sobered her spirit. As the life of youth is still hers, so are all its interests. In truth, they have widened with the widening years. As her children have grown up and entered into their several professions, she has accompanied them. Whatever touches their life touches hers, whatever interests them interests her. If she cannot enter into their

fields, she can at least come to the fence and look over. So, disavowing all professional knowledge, she is yet singularly intelligent in medicine, law, journalism, theology, and teaching. Her children, when they come home, find her always a ready pupil, and, often to their surprise, their intellectual comrade. Although infirmity begins to put its limitations on her activities, never did life seem to her to be so large, so varied, so full of ever-broadening interest. She occasionally brings out of the past sacred and stimulating memories. But she does not live in the past. She lives in her children, that is in the present, and in her grandchildren, that is in the future.

To the grandchildren her home is "Grandmamma's house." To go

there is a coveted reward for good behavior; to be denied is a severe penalty. In her possession are some toys of her childhood; to be permitted to play with these is a distinguished honor. She has some reminiscences of her childhood which are better than fairy stories. But it is not the toys, nor yet the stories, which make the visit to Grandmamma's house a treat; it is the atmosphere. For here the children are put upon their honor, and both expected and trusted to deserve it. These are not her children, they are her children's children. She sometimes laughs good-humoredly at the modern methods of child-nurture, but never when the grandchildren are within hearing. Whatever the methods of the parents are, she loy-

ally carries them out; and neither by surreptitious indulgences undermines the parents' authority, nor superimposes added regulations of her own to those to which the children are accustomed. To the question, "May I?" her habitual answer is, "What would your mother say?" The children are thus thrown upon their own responsibility and taught to govern themselves in accordance with their own home standards. There are many old people who have affection for children, but few who have respect for them; and yet, slow as we are to believe it, childhood cares more for respect than for affection. It is, perhaps, because respect is the boon more rarely bestowed. The "law of liberty" is the law of "Grandmamma's house"; and the

children return after an afternoon's experience of self-government more loyal to the law of their own home because for two hours they have enforced that law themselves.

She is an invalid. But her best friends do not know it; she declines to know it herself. Her doctor has told her and has told her husband that her disease can be delayed but not averted, and counsels her to observe certain prescribed conditions of life. She accepts the counsel and lives under the limitations set for her; but within those limitations she lives as cheerfully and as freely as if her liberties knew no bounds. She offers to her chronic infirmity neither a useless resistance nor a needless surrender. She is sometimes banished to her bed for a week; when

she comes out of her bedroom again, it is as one who has been enjoying a week of happy vacation from customary cares. The pains which sometimes beset her she conceals so successfully that she is almost tempted to disbelieve in them herself. Forbidden to do much walking, to climb steep hills, to take long drives, to work in her garden, to subject herself to either violent exercise or great excitement, her ingenuity always finds some other reason than invalidism for her declination to share in the more strenuous life of the household. She is fond of telling the story of the aged patriarch, who, hobbling along the sidewalk resting on his cane, replied to the neighbor's "How do you do this morning?" with, "My house is getting rather

out of repair, but I myself was never in better health."

So the end draws daily nearer, and no one guesses it except herself. Her life is not ebbing away, it is at its flood. She has trained herself in the habit of immortality, the habit of looking, not at the things which are seen and are transitory, but at the things which are not seen and are eternal. Her anticipatory ambitions for her children and her grandchildren are boundless, and the hopes for herself which made radiant the dawn of her life seem dim beside the higher hopes for her loved ones which fill life's eventide with sunshine. Her husband and herself are lovers still; the honeymoon has never set, never even waned; and to his love is added that of those

whom God has given to her. She thinks to live naturally is the best preparation for dying peacefully; rarely, therefore, does she allow herself to forecast the coming day. When she does, not with dread but with a solemn gladness she looks forward to emancipation from the irksome bonds of the fettering body and to embarkation for that unknown continent where many colonists are already gathered to give her greeting. Faith, hope, love — these are life. And her faith was never so clear, for her heart was never so pure; her hopes were never so great, for experience has enlarged them; and her love was never so rich, for God, who is love, has been her life Companion.

X

ALONE

X

ALONE

You have taken your last look at the dear face. You are more certain than ever of that of which you were always certain, — that God's child shares his Father's immortality. For kindly death has smoothed out the creases from her brow, and save for the gray hair, she looks as young, lying there asleep, as when you took her a bride from her father's house. You recall Paul's counsel of comfort: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the

things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." And you resolutely turn your thoughts away from these last hours — the failing health, the paling cheek, the half-conscious struggle — to the undaunted courage, the unmurmuring endurance, the self-forgetful love. That last gentle pressure of the hand, that last look of affection from the half-closed eyes, when the lips could no longer speak, summon all the past before you. As you sit by the open window with a few of the flowers she loved on the table at your side, and the song of the birds drifting in from the garden, you live over again the years that are fled.

The shadowy figure of a gracious

woman comes before you, now looking down with tender eyes upon her little child at his play, now sitting caressingly beside him at his studies helping him unravel the tangle of his thinking. Your memory of your mother is but a shadowy dream, but your pulse beats quicker, and your thinking is clearer, and your courage is higher as you dream of her: her many counsels and her few commands; her protecting and your confiding; her rarely given comfortings and her habitually imparted courage. The time came when you could see her face and hear her words no more; and yet she remained your companion. Before you cared much for what God thought of your conduct you cared what she would think. That "Thou God seest me" you were

rather afraid to remember; that thou Mother seest me you were glad to believe, and your faith in her seeing was your chief guard against temptation and your best inspiration to virtue.

As her figure grows dim there emerges another which takes its place. For as you grew from childhood into youth, you came more consciously under your father's enforcing authority. As your will crossed his, as you disobeyed, and suffered his displeasure, and were subjected to his punishment, and then were taken back into his companionship again, a closer, dearer companionship than before, you gradually learned the meaning of law and obedience, of justice and of mercy. When now in church you say "Our Father

who art in heaven," again he seems to kneel beside you in the pew, and your hand reaches out to clasp his in trusting reverence.

In this series of dissolving views the home disappears, the school takes its place. How much of the lessons you learned there could you now recall? You could not give even the names of the text-books which you studied. You are accustomed to say, and truly, that you could not enter the Freshman class of the college from which you graduated with honors. But there are some school friends whom you can never forget. There is one especially with whom you shared many an hour of study and one memorable vacation. To what ambitions you incited each other. He has left no great mark upon the world, nei-

ther have you. He sailed away to render his service to mankind upon the other side of the globe, and what has become of him you do not know. But he has left his mark on you. You are a broader man for having known him; and you wonder whether you left any mark on him, and if so, what it was, and whether it has wholly gone.

And there is one teacher you will never forget. You did not know then, and you do not know now, whether he was a great scholar. But his aphoristic teachings gave your life a direction and an impulse it has never lost. "Do not gesture with malice aforethought." "Perplexity is generally a choice of blessings." "Do not kill yourself to keep yourself." "Keep on the safe side of certainty."

"A religion of profession without practice I can see through; and I guess the Lord is as far-sighted as I am." Whether these were original with him you do not know. But he made them his own; he lived them as well as uttered them. The school-book lessons you have forgotten: the teacher you will never forget.

You bade school life and school mates good-by and went out to take your part in the struggles of life. There one day you saw her who was to be henceforth the one woman in the world for you. Speedily was she crowned queen of your inmost thoughts. Before that experience you had not been self-distrustful. Nothing seemed too great for your ambition to attempt. But suddenly you halted. To win her, to be worthy of

her, to ask her to share your life and give her life to you and let you share it with her, seemed an impossible presumption. And yet — you could not stay your clamorous hope. Something — a blush, a tremor, a speech, a silence, a presence, a too determined absence — converted your preposterous desire for her into a still more preposterous resolve to win her. You spoke. She answered. Love clasped love; and henceforth you and she were one; and you went singing all the day a new song. From that glad hour when she told you that she was yours in plighted troth before the altar, your two lives flowed in a single stream. Henceforth to be worthy of her reverencing affection, to realize her splendid ideals, became the inspiration and the guide of your life.

At first you would be with her all the day long. You went with reluctant feet to your daily tasks, with hurrying feet returned to her again. But this was not what she wanted. She wished you to be not less a man for her sake, but more a man; fuller of ambition, stronger of purpose, fitted to play a larger, nobler part in life. Gradually you learned this lesson, caught this spirit from her. Thereafter, love both drove you from her and drew you to her; drove you from her that you might prove yourself more worthy of her. The longer separations, which at first you dreaded, you learned to anticipate. For since that first day, when to the declaration of your love she answered with an eloquent silence, you found her unable to reveal in words

the secrets of her heart. She left you to guess what she was too shy to speak. But her pen had not the shyness of her lips, and you have no literature so sacred as those love-letters which only her eye and yours have ever seen or ever will see. Never will you forget her indignation at the publication of the Browning letters. She was not lacking in curiosity; but she would not even so much as look at them.

God gave to you a child. You almost dreaded its coming lest it should divide this woman's heart and you should lose some part of her. Oh, fools and blind are we, not to know better heart of woman! Her enlarged love was all yours and all the child's. And the child became a new revelation of her and a new link in the chain

that bound you two together in sacred companionship. The child, too, opened a new chapter in the book of life, and brought you a new revelation of God. For no man truly knows how to say "Our Father" to God until some child says "My father" to him.

There came a time when your life plans went all awry, your ambitions were disappointed, failure confronted you, and cruel criticisms, like carrion-birds, flocked about you to devour the little that was left — your good name. How you fought off the approaching disaster, dreading above all else to disappoint her ambitions for you, dreading her clear vision of your unwisdom. At last you could delay no longer, and went home to tell her that all was

lost,—and to find that nothing was lost. For her undaunted faith in you saw in this disaster only another opportunity for you to show what stuff you were made of, and to win from her, if you would, a new admiration by your pluck and persistence. She gave you a new faith in yourself, and you had that night the soundest sleep you had enjoyed for weeks, and rose in the morning with a high resolve to clasp adversity to your arms as an honor-bringing friend. As you remember that eventful day and recall the wise man's question: "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a broken spirit who can raise up?" you say to yourself, "He was not married, or he would have known the answer." A good wife can raise up the broken spirit. What a surgeon

of the spirit she was! What a healing of the spirit was in her touch!

Sorrow came: sickness; the death of dear friends. You went down into the valley of the shadow of death together, and her companionship transfigured the clouds. You had wondered what was meant by Christ's promise, "Blessed are they that mourn"; by Paul's experience, "We glory in tribulations also." But now you wonder no more. You know. Mourning together gave you a new experience. Your sorrow became a "joyful sorrow." You would not erase that chapter from your book of life. It is the most sacred chapter of them all.

Except this last chapter.

For now the dreaded day has come. The tired head has laid itself

down upon the pillow from which it will rise no more; the eyes have given their last gleam of love; the encircling arm its last embrace; the lips their last kiss. The beating heart is stilled; and she whose face in repose you had often watched with a strange sense of ownership, you have looked on for the last time in the infinite calm of the breathless sleep. And you are left alone.

No! Not alone. How often in the years gone by, absent from her in study, street, or office, has her courage conquered your fears, her confidence in you vanquished your self-distrust, her high ideals revived your fainting purpose. And now, though you sorely miss the tender touch of the vanished hand and the kindling glance of the vanished eye, you are

not alone. You want no table-rapping, no meaningless messages on a slate, no disappointing elusive apparition, to assure you of her presence. Unseen, she is still your companion; unheard, she is still your inspiration. Never did you understand her so well as you understand her now; never did she so well understand you,—your love, your gratitude. For now you know that she has made you what you are. By attributing to you powers, she has created them; by imputing to you virtues, she has inspired them. Home builder, because builder of her children, builder of her husband, and so, all unconsciously, builder of herself.

Three companions she has left behind to strengthen and to comfort you: Faith, Hope, Love. Faith, which

looks upon the unseen and realizes the sacred invisible companionship. Hope, which anticipates a reunion when your remaining journey is completed and she stands waiting on the other side to welcome you. Love: her love, a never-to-be-forgotten memory, an ever-present inspiration; the love, recalled, of mother, father, schoolmate, teacher; the love of friends, hers and yours, repeating to you in welcome words their love for her; the love of the dear Father speaking in them all and through them all. And the greatest of these is love. "Love is strong as death. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." Strong as death? Stronger! infinitely stronger. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death, and

for you already Death is destroyed by Love that endureth forever. As you sit in that radiant chamber, in that loneliness which is the divinest companionship, with Faith that sees, Hope that anticipates, and Love that cheers, you say aloud, and you think she understands you: "Death is swallowed up in Victory."

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